

There being no objection, the letter was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

SEPTEMBER 18, 1997.

DEAR PRESIDENT CLINTON: We are writing to demonstrate our support of the many other individuals and organizations urging the United States government to sign a treaty for a comprehensive ban on anti-personnel landmines along with 100 other nations scheduled to meet in Ottawa this December.

Mr. President, we ask you to reflect on repercussions of your final decision on this matter. We are aware that you plan to condition your approval of the ban on the inclusion of certain exceptions considered vital to U.S. security interests and in the best interest of military personnel. Consider for a moment the dangerous precedent that would be set if the United States asks for concessions. Indecision by a world superpower is sure to undermine the long effort to reach this ban, only leading to further delays.

It is clear that every additional week of delay will leave hundreds of innocent men, women, and children dead or maimed due to these devices whose military value is highly questionable. The recently publicized 1972 US Army report vividly describes the terrible toll US anti-personnel landmines have taken on its own soldiers during the Korean and Vietnam conflicts.

We, Nobel Peace Laureates, are joining the Albert Schweitzer Institute for the Humanities, named after the renowned humanist and Nobel Peace laureate Dr. Albert Schweitzer, and the Connecticut Coalition to Abolish Landmines in the international call to ban landmines. We add our collective voice to that of many other individuals, organizations and governments who strongly support this ban.

As the leader of a major world power, it is in your hands to demonstrate courageous leadership and endorse the comprehensive ban on landmines.

Donald S. Gann, on behalf of American Friends Service Committee, 1947; Dr. Norman E. Borlaug, 1970; Mairead Maguire, 1976; Betty Williams, 1976; Mother Theresa, 1979 (verbal agreement given three days before her death); Adolfo Perez Esquivel, 1980; Lech Walesa, 1983; The Most Rev. Desmond Tutu, 1984; Dr. Gurwarj Mutalik, on behalf of International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, 1985; Elie Wiesel, 1986; Oscar Arias Sanchez, 1987; Mikhail S. Gorbachev, 1990; Joseph Rotblat, on behalf of Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs, 1995; Bishop Carlos Felipe Belo, 1996; Jose Ramos Horta, 1996.

FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION MODERNIZATION AND ACCOUNT- ABILITY ACT OF 1997

The Senate continued with the consideration of the bill.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, after consultation with my distinguished colleague, my dear friend from Vermont, Senator JEFFORDS, I have been authorized to yield back all remaining time for today on S. 830.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The time is yielded back.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I thank the Chair for his consideration and listening to this long speech. While I have spoken maybe 50 times on this issue on the floor, I thought it was important to put in the RECORD exactly what has happened and why the United States is not on the treaty, but to also implore the President, who I feel does want to see it ban landmines, to take the steps necessary so the United States can be part of this treaty.

I yield the floor.

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there now be a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 5 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

LABOR, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, EDUCATION APPROPRIATIONS ACT—AMENDMENT NO. 1122

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, I am here to outline certain changes to my amendment that was accepted as part of the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education Appropriations Act as passed by the Senate. These changes will be submitted to the House-Senate conference committee. My amendment, No. 1122, would block grant funds from several K-12 education programs in the Department of Education and send those funds directly to school districts. These changes have been incorporated into a new draft of the amendment.

The genesis of the changes is a series of discussions with my colleagues in the Senate and other interested parties. While these changes correct minor drafting errors, they do so without changing the overall philosophy of the amendment. The most significant of the changes exclude from the block grant entirely any funds from the Adult Education, Vocational Education, and Rehabilitation Services programs, programs not primarily directed at K-12 education. Other programs excluded from the block grant are: Indian Education, the Inexpensive Book Distribution Program, Arts In Education, Star Schools Program, and Technology Innovation Challenge grants.

Finally, the distribution of bilingual education funds is changed. These funds will be sent to school districts in the same proportion as the funds were distributed in fiscal year 1997, much like title I funds are distributed in the amendment. For example, if a school district were eligible for .25 percent of all bilingual education funds in fiscal year 1997, it will be eligible for the same share in fiscal year 1998.

Mr. President, these changes correct minor drafting errors and incorporate the suggestions of several supporters for minor improvements. These changes, however, do not affect the amendment's overall philosophy, which is to restore the decisionmaking authority for the education of our children to where it belongs; the hands of parents, teachers, principals, superintendents, and school board members. I look forward to discussing this issue further with my colleagues during conference committee meetings.

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Monday, September 22, 1997, the Federal debt stood at \$5,378,803,586,241.44. (Five trillion, three hundred seventy-eight billion, eight hundred three million, five hundred eighty-six thousand, two hundred forty-one dollars and forty-four cents)

Five years ago, September 22, 1992, the Federal debt stood at \$4,040,323,000,000. (Four trillion, forty billion, three hundred twenty-three million)

Ten years ago, September 22, 1987, the Federal debt stood at \$2,353,878,000,000. (Two trillion, three hundred fifty-three billion, eight hundred seventy-eight million)

Fifteen years ago, September 22, 1982, the Federal debt stood at \$1,107,571,000,000. (One trillion, one hundred seven billion, five hundred seventy-one million)

Twenty-five years ago, September 22, 1972, the Federal debt stood at \$437,448,000,000 (Four hundred thirty-seven billion, four hundred forty-eight million) which reflects a debt increase of nearly \$5 trillion—\$4,941,355,586,241.44 (Four trillion, nine hundred forty-one billion, three hundred fifty-five million, five hundred eighty-six thousand, two hundred forty-one dollars and forty-four cents) during the past 25 years.

CONGRATULATIONS TO CHARLEY L. BYRD CELEBRATING HIS 100TH BIRTHDAY

Mr. ASHCROFT. Mr. President, I rise today to encourage my colleagues to join me in congratulating Charley L. Byrd of Lentner, MO, who will celebrate his 100th birthday on October 23, 1997. Charley is a truly remarkable individual. He has witnessed many of the events that have shaped our Nation into the greatest the world has ever known. The longevity of Charley's life has meant much more, however, to the many relatives and friends whose lives he has touched over the last 100 years.

Charley's celebration of 100 years of life is a testament to me and all Missourians. His achievements are significant and deserve to be recognized. I would like to join Charley's many friends and relatives in wishing him health and happiness in the future.